

LOWER EMISSIONS

PIPELINES EMIT LOWER GHG EMISSIONS THAN OTHER WAYS TO DELIVER ENERGY

We need to deliver energy from where it is produced to where it is turned into useful products and then on to us in our local regions. Pipelines are the cleanest and safest way to deliver that energy.

Pipelines Emit Fewer GHGs

Liquids pipelines are powered primarily by electric pumps with no GHG emissions of their own. That also means neither the pipeline itself nor the pump station pushing the product through the line emit air pollution to the surrounding area or nearby communities. However, both trains and trucks with conventional diesel engines emit GHG emissions and air pollutants as they travel from community to community. Pipelines can also travel a shorter, more direct route, while train deliveries must follow existing rail lines that can result in longer trips. Government reviews, like the Obama administration Environmental Impact Statement for the Keystone XL pipeline, quantify how pipelines result in fewer GHGs when delivering the same amount of energy.

-42%

Fewer GHG Emissions

Pipelines Cause Fewer Incidents, Release Fewer Barrels

In addition to releasing fewer emissions, pipelines also cause fewer incidents and release less of their product into the environment than their main transportation alternative. Government review of the Keystone XL pipeline found the probability of an incident was 800 times greater by rail than pipeline. This shouldn't be surprising since it would take over a dozen mile-long trains with 100 rail cars each to carry the same amount of product delivered by a pipeline of that size. In addition to a greater likelihood of incident, the government review also found transporting the same amount of product by rail would result in 2.6 times more crude oil released into the environment.

-62%

Fewer Barrels Released

Data Source

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Keystone XL Project, U.S. Department of State, 2014, pp. 5.3-5 to -8.

Obama Administration Review of Pipeline Impacts

The Obama administration under the National Environmental Policy Act conducted a multi-year review totaling several thousand pages to analyze the environmental impacts of the Keystone XL pipeline. The review included a direct comparison of pipeline and the alternative of transporting the crude by rail. It provides a good measure of the impacts of a major pipeline project.

Emissions Impacts

Pipelines



The Obama administration found a pipeline emits 42% less GHGs than transporting the same amount of energy by rail.

Rail

Rejecting a major pipeline and shipping the same energy by rail increases GHG emissions by 1.2 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent per year.

Environmental Impacts

Pipelines



The Obama administration found a pipeline has 0.1% of the incidents and 62% fewer barrels released compared to shipping by rail

Rail

Rejecting a major pipeline and shipping the same energy by rail increases the risk of oil release by over 800 times and barrels released by 2.6 times

